

RECKLESS RALPH'S

DIME NOVEL ROUND-UP

OFFICIAL ORGAN HAPPY HOURS BROTHERHOOD

THOSE IVERS' REPRINTS OF BEADLE'S BOYS LIBRARY

By Willis E. Hurd

Something happened in January, 1899, when the M. J. Ivers Co. set out to reprint the first 64 issues of Beadle's Boys Library. All went well with No. 1, issued as "Dandy Bill's Doom," by Oll Coomes, on January 8 of that year. But when No. 2 went to press, rumor, or history, has it that the cover plate broke, and so No. 2 was omitted from subsequent catalogs of the series. I have the impression, however, that No. 2 was included in an early catalog of the Ivers' publications.

No. 2 originally contained Prentiss Ingraham's story under the title of "Buffalo Bill, from Boyhood to Manhood." In the Ivers' reprint, dated January 15, 1899, the cover title was changed to "The Pony-Express Rider," although the subsequent page-heads were carried as originally printed.

Now it happens that I have a genuine copy of the No. 2 Ivers' reprint, and in announcing it, I now realize that I have shattered a fable of long standing amongst the collectors that it did not appear.

It may be that early in the press-work, No. 2 was spoiled, but the fact remains that at least a few copies were issued, else how could I possess one? Then too, I must have had the catalog number or I never would have ordered it.

My file is complete. I ordered the novels, about 10 at a time, direct from the publishers, and in August 1901, had them all bound in two cloth volumes for preservation.

Other collectors, I understand have the remaining 63, and have filled in the gap of No. 2 with an original Beadle and Adams copy. I wonder if my No. 2 is actually the only one known to collectors.

The novels are commonly known as a tricolor series. But I imagine the first reprints were in black and white only. My copies from Nos. 1 to 31, inclusive, are black and white. Most, but not all, of the remainder have the additional colored cover. The plain prints had uncut edges, but the tricolors had clipped edges as furnished by the publishers.

The final book in the series is

Aiken's "Young Dick Talbot," printed under date of March 25, 1900.

I wonder if any other collector has a further word to offer regarding this remarkable set.

Cherrydale, Va.,

December 5, 1934

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ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Courtesy O'Brien Sale Catalogue.

The Private Life of Abraham Lincoln, by Orrville J. Victor, comprising a full account of his early years and a succinct Record of his Career as Statesman, and President of the United States of America in 1864. Was published at 10c per copy, 96 pages, 10mo. original Colored Pictorial Wrappers, and published by Beadle & Co., New York.

Written at the end of 1864, with the evident intention of issuing it soon after, but the assassination occurred before publication took place and Victor therefore hastily wrote and caused to be bound into the book—even in front of the title page, a brief notice headed "In Memoriam" which though but four pages in length, is one of the finest and sanest estimates written at the time of the tragedy. Thus: "Few men realized the magnitude of his task, it was too mighty for comprehension; few men were dissatisfied enough to judge justly; few were wise enough to judge understandingly."

The man who wrote those lines was the Editor of the House of Beadle; the one who choose and edited the books it published, and he, as his editorial policy has proved, was himself wise enough to judge understandingly the nature and usefulness of his own task. For decade after decade his influence was ceaselessly devoted to exalting and

preserving the deeds, speech, appearance and character, of American pioneers, the conditions under which they lived, and the result of their labors.

No other editor ever had so great an audience, and none has had so great an ultimate justification and triumph. The tales that he searched for, bought, and caused to be issued at five or ten or twenty cents apiece are today prized at many hundredfold their publication price, and are guarded in morocco slip-cases.

(W. R. Johnson.)

—:o:—

BLUESKIN

By Henry Steele

Blueskin, or Joseph Blake, is always associated with Jack Sheppard. He was his boon companion in crime. He was published in the Charles Fox edition of "Jack Sheppard," published in penny numbers about 1870 and re-issued several times. In the story the Author, (whoever he was) does not stick to facts, and in the end both Blueskin and Jack Sheppard escape the gallows and live to be old men, dying eventually in Italy. All this of course is wrong.

A famous tale dealing with him was "Blueskin," published by Harrison & Viles in 1866 in 1d numbers. It was a very long story running into 157 numbers. In this narrative Blueskin & Sheppard also avoid being hanged and finish up their days in France. In the "Newgate Calendar" published in 1773 it states that Joseph Blake (Blueskin) was executed at Tyburn on Nov. 11, 1724 for burglary. Jack Sheppard was executed at Tyburn in the same year on Nov. 16th.

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